GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3409
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2001
TWIN CITY PROJECT BETWEEN CALCUTTA AND HOWRAH
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Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry are aware of the crucial condition of the oldest city of Bengal, Howrah; and

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering a comprehensive twin city project between Calcutta and Howrah metropolis for its overall development, especially slums and thickly populated by religious minorities during the Tenth Five Year Plan?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT & POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA)

(a)&(b): The Government of West Bengal has informed that Kolkata Municipal Development Authority (KMDA) has been executing several schemes for infrastructure development in the twin cities of Kolkata and Howrah since 1970. Three World Bank assisted programmes namely Calcutta Urban Development Project (CUDP) I, II and III were implemented during 1971-1992, which included water supply, sanitation, traffic and transportation with special emphasis to over all improvement of the slum pockets of the two cities through the `Basti Improvement Projects`. Under the Ganga Action Plan, several schemes of sewerage treatment plan at Garden Reach, Kashipur, Chitpur, South Suburban, Howrah etc. were executed.

After the termination of CUDP-III programmes in 1992 the development projects were continued through KMDA`s Eighth Plan Projects. Thereafter, under the Megacity Scheme started in 1994-95, 57 schemes worth about Rs.509 crores were taken up covering the two cities. Out of these 30 schemes are so far been completed at an estimated cost of Rs.277 crores. Major projects taken up under the Megacity Scheme were augmentation of Water Treatment Plants at Garden Reach and Howrah, reservoir at Mohammad Ali Park, Behala, Garfa, Salkia, Kona etc., Kona Expressway, roads around Howrah Maidan Area, Kona Truck Terminal, Garia Bridge, widening of EMBP and connectors, Drainage schemes at HMC (Ward 1-16), renovation of Kolkata Trunk Sewers and drains, Housing Projects at Golfgreen, Baisnabghata Patuli, Hoogly River Front Beautification etc. After the construction of Second Hoogly Bridge by Hoogly River Bridge Commission and improvement of its connecting roads at both banks of the river, the transportation system between the twin cities have considerably improved.

KMDA has been implementing several schemes relating to improvement of urban slums with the funds provided under different schemes such as CUDP I, II and III, Minimum Needs Programme, Department for International Development (DFID-UK) assisted Calcutta Slum Improvement Projects (Phase Ia, Ib and Ic and Tenth Finance Commission Award. Under these programmes, 21.5 lakhs population has been covered over the entire Kolkata Metropolitan area. Majority of the slum pockets are within the Twin Cities of Kolkata and Howrah out of which many areas like Kidderpore, Rajabazar, Garden Reach, Park Circus, Pilkhana etc. are thickly populated by the religious minorities.

The KMDA has also recently published Perspective Plan named `Vision 2025` for overall comprehensive development of twin cities and other areas of Kolkata Metropolitan Area. Continuance of these programmes including the projects under Megacity Scheme will depend upon the provision in the Tenth Five Year Plan which is yet to be finalised.